

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

Meeting of Thursday, November 5, 2009

5:15 p.m.

Cabinet Room, Department of Education
2nd Floor South Wing, Townsend Building

MINUTES

Members Present: Joanne Christian, Marilyn Dollard, Karen Gordon, Cristy Greaves, David Kohan, , Wendy Murray, Whitney Price, Karen Schilling-Ross, Juanita Wilson and Kathleen Thomas

Members Absent: Michael Casson, Samtra Devard, Lori Hudson, Jill Lewandowski; Gretchen Pikus, and Shelley Rouser

Others Present: Charlie Michels, PSB Executive Director; Pearl Carrington, Secretary; Judi Coffield, Policy Analyst for the State Board of Education, Mike Hoffman, VP DSEA

Opening:

Call to Order: Ms. Thomas, Professional Standards Board Chair called the meeting to order at 5:25 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Ms. Gordon and seconded by Dr. Christian to approve the Agenda. The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Ms. Murray and seconded by Ms. Wilson to approve the Board Meeting minutes of October 1, 2009. The motion carried.

Establishment of PSB meeting Norms

The following points were shared by Members in the discussion.

- Prior to the Meeting, the PSB Chair and Executive Director will:
 - Set a reasonable two (2) hour Agenda
 - Post estimated time frames on the Agenda
- During the Meeting:
 - Speakers will be recognized by the Chair or the Executive Director
 - Sidebar conversations will be held outside of the meeting room
 - Members will make every effort to hold comments under to 2 minutes
 - Comments will be clear, concise, convincing and ‘on topic’
 - The Chair will encourage all Members to voice their thoughts
 - Members will be inclusively responsible to maintain Meeting Norms
- Other collective Norms
 - Move Action Items to after the Executive Director’s Report, with

Discussion Items following

- Move any Presentation toward the end of the Agenda
- A mid-meeting break will be decided upon during each meeting
- “Attack the problem, not the person”
- Comments and Concerns may be forwarded to the Executive Director prior to meetings in order to facilitate a more productive and expedient discussion

❖ Ms. Thomas reported that several of the PSB Members were absent due to previous commitments or illness.

- Dr. Casson was in Washington D.C. at a conference
- Dr. Rouser was in New Orleans presenting Peer Review Strategies at a conference
- Ms. Hudson was attending the National Middle School Association Conference in Indianapolis

II. Public Comment

Mr. Mike Hoffman, DSEA Vice President.

Mr. Hoffman, a para-educator for the Colonial School District, spoke to the proposed amendments in the Paraeducator Permit Regulation 1517. Specifically, he shared his concern under options for renewal: language in Section 6.2.2 *Planned Professional Development Programs which on the school, district or charter school's Success Plan which may be targeting curriculum, instruction, assessment, school climate, or other identified need.* Mr. Hoffman spoke to problems around professional development for Paraeducators, as they are often not given the opportunity to participate in building or district professional development activities. At times this makes it difficult for Paraeducators accumulate the required clock hours. He asked the Board to consider shortening the Section statement to make it more open ended. He was also concerned and recommended that section 6.2.1 retain the standing regulation acceptable grade of ‘C’ for courses taken by Paraeducator.

III. Presentation

(None)

IV. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Michels began his Report at 5:20, prior to the Board reaching a quorum.

- Mr. Michels stated that Mr. Dan Cruce, the DOE Associate Secretary for Administration and Innovation, and Chief of Staff, sends his regrets as he was unable to make the meeting.
- **Teach For America Update** – Mr. Michels reported that as of 10/20/2009, six Teacher For America corps members were missing all or parts of Praxis I examinations, and two members needed to complete a Praxis II examination. This information that was reported to the State Board of Education during their October meeting. Mr. Cruce said that there were apparently some changes in the Teach For America office personnel which may have led to some miscommunication. The Department [Mr. Dan Cruce, specifically] promised the State Board of Education that they will keep an eye on these alternative route educators to insure compliance with Code and regulations.

- **Emergency Certificate Update** – In the latest amended version of the amended regulation there is a 60 day application deadline between date of hire and application, or the certificate will be denied. Mr. Michels reported that during a quarterly meeting with Dr. Barton’s Office of Professional Accountability, there were a number of district Personnel Directors who said that the DEEDS application was cumbersome and a very few indicated that they were not going to fill out the application completely. They said that the site requested too much information about the what, where and when of the necessary components the educator would need to complete to receive a Standard Certificate. Mr. Michels iterated to the group that those requirements were in the regulation which was indeed law. He indicated that he would work on the DEEDS site to facilitate changes in the process, but that the requirements stood. Mr. Michels stated that he will be attempting to identify ‘late’ applications and then pursue the Department’s denial of these Emergency Certificates.

- **DOE Office of Professional Accountability:** The DOE Office of Professional Accountability is currently short-staffed and has needed to prioritize their functions. The DOE has lost close to 40 positions since October 1. Some of the positions were casual/seasonal, some were Teachers on Loan, and some were due to retirements. The DOE has been able fill a few positions considered critical to their work.

- **DOE Strategic Plan:** Mr. Michels stated that the DOE’s Strategic Plan is still at the Governor’s Office where it is being reviewed and amended. It is Mr. Michels’ understanding that the Governor’s office will be releasing their version of the Strategic Plan along with the new Education Reform Agenda within several weeks. The DOE will be energetically working on the Federal “Race to the Top” application when the Federal regulations are released in a couple of weeks. The Department has contracted the McKenzie Group to help write the RTTT proposal application. Mr. Cruce understands that there is supposed to be a minimum of a 60 day window after the final application guidelines have been disseminated for the submission, but has heard that it may be extended to 90 days.

- **The Professional Standards Board’s Ethical Guideline for Educators:**
Mr. Michels has contacted a variety of organizations: the School Chiefs via Dr. Bunting of IRSD, DSEA, DASA, DSBA, The District Personnel Directors, Vision 2015, and DOE’s Dr. Mary Ellen Kotz, the Mentoring Program Coordinator. Mr. Michels also contacted Mr. Dave Seckler who is directing the Delaware Administrative Mentoring Program through DASL. He also contacted Representative Schooley, Chair of the House Education Committee, and Senator Sokola, Chair of the Senate Education Committee. Mr. Michels has received considerable positive reactions. The **Guideline** was published as a full page spread in DSEA’s October **ACTION** Publication. The document has been posted on the Professional Standards Board website; top right corner.

- **Freedom of Information Act Procedures:**
Mr. Michels stated that Board should approve a PSB Freedom of Information Act Procedures Manual in anticipation of future requests. He has been working with Mr. Ron Gough, the DOE Information Officer, who developed the Department’s Policy. The

document will be before the PSB for approval in December.

- **Legal Counsel Concerns:** Mr. Michels stated that Mr. John Hindman has been appointed to represent the DOE and will be available to Mr. Michels and the PSB on a consultative basis.
- **House Bill 224:** HB 224 is a bill introduced during the last General Assembly that would require a two hour training / professional development in the area of appropriate student – teacher relationships. It is anticipated that legislators will make efforts to move forward HB 224 in January of 2010.
- **Library Media Program at University of Delaware:** Mr. Michels recently received an email from Ms. Denise Allen, The DOE Education Associate working with School Library Media Specialists. Apparently the School Library Media Specialist Masters program at the UD may be ‘put on hold’, pending the retirement of the current Director. Ms. Allen has asked that the Board consider drafting a letter be written encouraging the University to continue the program. The Board’s consensus was for Mr. Michels to draft such a letter, which he promised to do in the near future.

V. PSB Standing Committees

Mr. Michels felt it was appropriate to share the Standing Committee’s thoughts prior to the Board reviewing the same regulations.

A. Licensure and Certification Criteria – this Committee met on 10/28/2009. Members present were: Ms. Barbara VanDornick, UD; Dr. Wayne Barton, Ms. Maria Degnats and Ms. Erin Pieshala, DOE Professional Accountability; Dr. Tammy Croce, HR Director from Lake Forest; and Dr. Joseph Faldon, Delaware State University. The Committee members discussed many of the regulations that were on the 11/5/2009 PSB Agenda.

Initial License: There was discussion surrounding the definition of an “authorized leave of absence”. Dr. Croce stated that all Personnel Directors understood that “authorized” meant approval of the local Board of Education. The current language indicates a maximum of 3 years, but she felt that very few districts would allow that length of time. The Committee looked at the standing Praxis I scores for Initial Licensure and felt that they were reasonable. There was some concern about the ‘composite score’ language in the regulation, as none of the DE Teacher Preparation Programs allow for a Praxis I composite score. The Higher Education representatives said that the Universities can hold their students to their standards/cut scores without feeling obligated to accept composite scores. The Committee understood that this regulation will be held for a vote to publish until after the Continuing License regulation has met Final Approval.

Educator Mentoring: There were discussions about aligning the Mentoring Program to Charlotte Danielson’s work, as opposed to aligning the Mentoring Program to the current DPAS. Mr. Michels responded that the PSB felt strongly that the Program was indeed aligned with Danielson’s work. It was noted that Section 5.0 in the amended regulation was not current practice, and it was questioned whether or not it was indeed necessary or fair. The Committee’s recommendation was to delete this entire Section.

Para Educator Permits: A discussion opened with the renewal Option being potentially amended to raise the grade from a 'C' to a 'B' in coursework to mirror the amended the Continuing License Regulation. This change brought disfavor amongst the Committee.

School Nurse: Mr. Michels posed the question; should we eliminate the standing requirement for a Bachelor's degree in Nursing or School Nursing? It was generally felt by the LCC Committee that the current criteria were appropriate for these critical educators. It was noted that Charter school regulations require a Registered Nurse in their buildings, not a certified School Nurse.

B. Professional Development and Associated Compensation.

The Professional Development and Associated Compensation Committee had not met.

VI. Discussion

A. 1517 Permits Para Educators

Mr. Michels introduced the amended regulation and spoke to some small changes in the document since the last PSB meeting. There was conversation about the possibility of adding the Praxis I exam cut scores required for Initial Licensure in reading, writing and math as an additional option for attaining the Permit. The Board felt this was an acceptable option. The amended Options for renewal mirror those in the currently amended Continuing License regulation moving through the approval process. There was discussion and consensus about amending Section 6.2.2 to make it less restrictive for Paraeducators seeking clock hours such that it fit their needs and is available. It was discussed that it was not critical for the grade received in coursework be a 'B' for Paraeducators, therefore it was suggested to keep the standing grade of 'C'.

B. 1503 Educator Mentoring

Mr. Michels has scheduled a meeting with Dr. Barton, Mr. Cruce and Mr. Jackson of the DOE on November 30 to review regulation 1503 Educator Mentoring to get the initial official response from the Department. The LCC Committee's comments were discussed and the Board affirmed their commitment to Dr. Danielson's work as the basis for the Mentoring Program. The Board's consensus was to eliminate the current Section 5.0 Experienced Delaware Educators New to an Employing Authority. Mr. Michels stated that after the meeting with DOE staff, he will schedule a time for the DOE Cabinet to review the regulation prior to asking the PSB for a Vote to Publish.

C. 1510 Issuance of Initial License

There was open discussion of a document Mr. Michels had developed which listed various states' required Praxis I scores for their equivalent of Initial Licensure. It was noted that not all states use Praxis I scores. Although there seems to be a movement to push for higher entrance requirements for Teacher Preparation Programs across the country, research has not conclusively indicated doing so would produce more effective educators. The consensus of the PSB Members was to leave the Praxis I scores as they currently stand. Mr. Michels suggested that the PSB wait until the Continuing License regulation meets Final Approval

before moving this regulation forward for Publication. The Board agreed with Mr. Michels' suggestion.

D. 1511 Issuance and Renewal of Continuing License

1511 was approved for Publication by the PSB in October. The regulation is scheduled to be reviewed by the State Board of Education and subsequently voted upon to Concur to Publish during their November 19, 2009 meeting. There was some discussion regarding the professional development Options and if they do fit the amended definition of professional development. Mr. Michels indicated he will do some more work connecting these to the National Staff Development Council's standards prior to the State Board of Education meeting.

E. 1582 School Nurse

Mr. Michels stated that he met with Ms. Linda Wolf, Education Associate for School Nursing and her immediate supervisor, Mr. Michael Jackson, Education Associate of Finance to review regulation *1582 School Nurse*. Both DOE staff members were adamant about retaining the requirement in the regulation that a certified School Nurse has a Bachelors degree in either Nursing or School Nursing. Open discussion followed with points of view being shared on both sides of the issue. Board members were asked to bring this concern back to their constituents prior to December's PSB meeting.

VII. Action Items

None

VIII. Other

It was noted that the DOE has a relatively new policy and procedure of physically not printing Licenses and then sending them to thousands of educators, both in and out of Delaware. Licenses are now available to educators online. That type of access however, may result in a less than professional certificate being printed out on an individual's printer.

IX. Public Comment

None

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Ms. Dollard and seconded by Ms. Gordon to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

During the course of this meeting, the Professional Standards Board may enter into Executive Session to consider strategy with respect to pending and potential litigation or with respect to personnel issues. The Professional Standards Board may also take breaks.

The times designated on the agenda are approximate and are listed for administrative purposes only. The Professional Standards Board reserves the right, pursuant to Section 10004(e) of the Freedom of Information Act, to hear any matter out of its order during the meeting.